



## H.B. 5108

### STATEMENT OF MILLER AUDITORIUM

As one of the largest performing arts centers in the state of Michigan, Miller Auditorium strongly opposes and urges the State Legislature to vote no on H.B. 5108.

We, as a performing arts center, face many challenges with unscrupulous ticket brokers under the current laws in place. By abolishing those current laws, we believe it will open the door to even more questionable practices.

While the bill being introduced may be intended to assist the consumer, it will in fact do nothing but hurt the consumer. It will give scalpers (mostly out of state) the ability to purchase large volumes of tickets, price them above face value, thus making the consumer pay more for a ticket than if they were to purchase directly from our venue.

In addition, our experience has shown that many of these scalpers mislead our consumers by utilizing our venue name in their website URL's, claiming to be an official ticketing outlet, when in fact they have simply created websites to look like ours to dupe our unsuspecting patrons into purchasing tickets at sometimes 5 times the actual price. Once the patron receives the tickets and sees the actual price of the ticket, they are often left with little recourse as these scalpers do not respond to emails or calls. That typically leaves the venue to deal with an irate customer.

In the last few years alone Miller Auditorium has seen patrons who have paid over \$100 a ticket to see Fancy Nancy the Musical. The tickets were \$25 and we were not dealing with a "sold out" situation where the tickets were in high demand. At several performances of Wicked, we had patrons who paid \$300 per ticket. The tickets face value were actually \$85. Additionally, at one performance, a consumer was sold a fraudulent ticket. So upon arriving at Miller, we did not have seats available for them. Because they didn't purchase the tickets from us, there is little as a venue we can do to help them.

These practices hurt our local economy. If a patron purchases a ticket at the cost a broker charges, it can limit the amount of money patrons spend at area restaurants and hotels. In addition, if artists can no longer rely on venues being able to sustain the integrity of sales to their fans, they are more apt to take their shows to states that have more protections in place, thus further damaging the economic impact.

Kalamazoo and Michigan as a whole have enjoyed a thriving arts and entertainment industry for years. We estimate the economic impact of Miller Auditorium to our community to be approximately \$11 million per year. H.B. 5108 will threaten that. Ticket brokers mislead the public. They are not our patrons, nor do they represent the best interest of our patrons.

